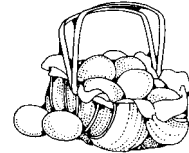




Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Pattern Components

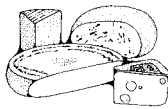
Meat and Meat Alternates

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations require that all lunches and suppers contain a serving of meat or meat alternates as specified in the meal pattern. Meat or meat alternates may also be served as one of the two required components of a snack.



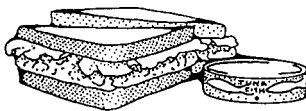
When planning the meat/meat alternate component for CACFP menus, keep the following in mind:

- Meat includes lean meat, poultry or fish. Meat alternates include alternate protein products, cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut and coconut) and yogurt. These foods must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish and one other item, to meet this requirement.



- At lunch or supper, the serving size is 1 ounce for ages 1-2, 1½ ounces for ages 3-5, and 2 ounces for ages 6-12. To be counted toward any part of the meat/meat alternate requirement, a menu item must provide a minimum of ¼ ounce of cooked lean meat or equivalent. The rest of the required serving must be met by adding other meat or meat alternates.

- Amounts in the meat/meat alternate component refer to the **edible** portion, i.e., cooked, lean meat without bone. All meat/meat alternates must contain the appropriate size edible portion. For example, for ages 3-5, tuna salad must contain 1½ ounces of tuna **before** added ingredients such as mayonnaise, celery and seasonings.



- Nuts and seeds may fulfill all of the meat/meat alternate requirement for snack, but no more than one-half (50 percent) of the meat/meat alternate requirement for lunch or supper. Tree nuts and seeds that may be used as meat alternates include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios and soynuts. Note: Children under 5 are at the highest risk of choking. USDA recommends that any nuts and/or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food and are ground or finely chopped.



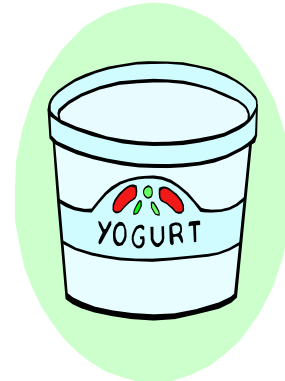


- Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas such as baked beans, lentils, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, split peas) may be credited as either a vegetable/fruit or a meat/meat alternate, but not both in the same meal. Any recipe using legumes as the only source of meat/meat alternate must provide the minimum serving sizes, as indicated in the meal pattern. (Serving size for lunch/supper: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for ages 1-2, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup for ages 3-5, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for ages 6-12. Serving size for snack: $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for ages 1-5 and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for ages 6-12.)



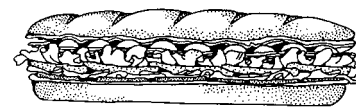
- Yogurt may be used as a meat alternate for children age 1 year and older. Keep the following in mind when planning yogurt as a meat/meat alternate component:

- ✓ Yogurt is a good source of calcium, but contains no iron and is often sweetened, so it should not be a frequent choice at lunch or supper as a substitute for meat or poultry.
- ✓ Four ounces (weight) or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (volume) of yogurt equals 1 ounce of meat/meat alternate.
- ✓ Homemade yogurt and frozen yogurt or other yogurt-flavored products (such as yogurt bars, yogurt-covered fruit and/or nuts) do not count as a meat/meat alternate in the CACFP meal pattern.
- ✓ The fruit in yogurt, whether blended, mixed, or on top, does not meet the vegetable/fruit component. Extra fruit that is added to the yogurt, such as fresh strawberries, canned peaches, or banana slices, can count towards the vegetable/fruit component.
- ✓ Drinkable yogurt cannot be credited as a meat/meat alternate. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) definition and Standard of Identity for yogurt requires that yogurt be "coagulated."



Nutrition Information for Meat/Meat Alternates

Meat, fish, poultry and eggs are good sources of protein, iron, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, niacin, riboflavin, niacin, thiamin, vitamins B₆, and B₁₂. They contain fat, saturated fat and cholesterol. Nuts and seeds (including peanut butter) are good sources of protein and dietary fiber, copper, magnesium, phosphorous, niacin, and vitamin E. They also contain fat. Dry beans and peas are good sources of protein, starch and fiber, as well as iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and folate. Cheese is a good source of protein, calcium, phosphorus, vitamins A and B₁₂. Cheese also contains fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.

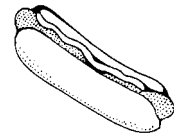




Binders, Extenders and Fillers

Luncheon meats, cold cuts, hot dogs, etc., must be **all meat** with no meat by-products, “variety” meats, cereals, binders or extenders. Product labels must be reviewed to ensure that only all meat products are served.

Ingredients that are considered binders and extenders include the following:



Cereal	Starchy vegetable flour	Dried milk
Soy protein concentrate*	Vegetable starch	Soy flour*
Isolated soy protein*	Dry or dried whey	Wheat gluten
Sodium caseinate	Whey protein concentrate*	Tapioca dextrin

*Alternate protein products (see below)

Alternate Protein Products (APP) and Vegetable Protein Products (VPP)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations allow the use of alternate protein products, such as vegetable burgers and other meatless entree items, to provide more flexibility in menu planning. Alternate protein products include both vegetable (e.g., isolated soy protein, soy protein concentrate and soy flour) and non-vegetable based (e.g., fruit puree, whey protein and casein) protein sources. Processed food items, such as a vegetarian burger or patty, may contain APP but the entire item cannot be considered an APP as it contains other ingredients such as seasonings or breading.

Alternate protein products include vegetable protein products (VPP). The term VPP is commonly used to describe all alternate protein products. However, the term APP is used in USDA regulations since it is more technically correct, as not all alternate protein products are vegetable based.

According to USDA regulations, APP may be credited for part or all of the meat/meat alternate requirement, if the following criteria are met:

1. The APP is processed so that some portion of the non-protein constituents of the food is removed. (This refers to the manufacturing process for APP.) Alternate protein products must be safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources.
2. The biological quality of the protein in the APP must be at least 80 percent that of casein (milk protein), determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS).
3. The APP contains at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. (“When hydrated or formulated” refers to a dry APP and the amount of water, fat, oil, colors, flavors or any other substances which have been added.)



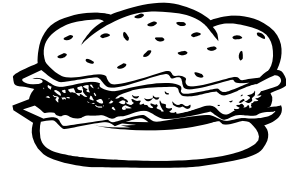
It should be noted that this information is not readily determined by reading the product's label. USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service and FDA labeling laws require manufacturers to list product ingredients, but percent labeling is voluntary. For example, a product may list whey protein concentrate and hydrolyzed soy protein, but will not indicate the percent of these protein ingredients by weight. *Consequently, it is the responsibility of CACFP sponsors to obtain documentation from the manufacturer for any APP used to meet the requirements of the meat/meat alternate component.*

Documentation of the above criteria can be provided by the manufacturer in a variety of forms, including specification sheets, a letter attesting that the requirements were met or labels on products (if available). Products that are CN labeled (see page 6) will provide information on how APP foods may be credited toward the meal pattern.

Crediting Commercially Prepared Breaded or Battered Meat Products

If commercially prepared breaded or battered meat products (such as chicken nuggets, chicken patties, fish sticks or fish portions) are not CN labeled, then *50 percent of the total weight may be credited as a meat/meat alternate*. For example:

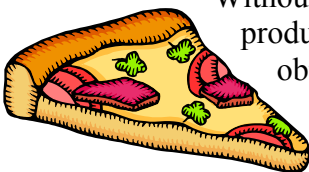
- three 1-ounce fish sticks equals 1½ ounces of meat;
- four 1-ounce chicken nuggets equals 2 ounces of meat; and
- one 2½-ounce chicken patty equals 1¼ ounces of meat.



Crediting Commercial Convenience Foods

Commercial convenience products such as beef stew, burritos, pizza and ravioli may be credited toward the meat/meat alternate component if:

1. the program uses CN labeled products (see page 6); or
2. a product analysis sheet signed by an official of the manufacturer (not a salesperson), stating the *amount of cooked lean meat/meat alternate in the product per serving* is on file.



Without this documentation, meals containing commercially prepared products may not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements. Be sure to obtain this information from the vendor before purchasing any commercially prepared foods.



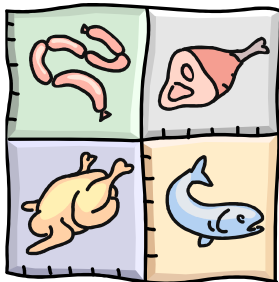
Meat/Meat Alternate versus Protein

While the terms protein and meat/meat alternate are often used interchangeably, it is important to remember that the CACFP meal pattern requirements are for a specific amount of meat/meat alternate, **not** for a specific amount of protein. The grams of protein on a product's food label cannot be used as an indicator that a product meets the meat/meat alternate requirement.

Protein is only one component of meat/meat alternates, comprising about 18 percent of the meat. Meat/meat alternates also contain other components such as water, fat, vitamins and minerals. Protein is also found in varying amounts in other foods, such as cereals, grains and many vegetables. Consequently, the grams of protein indicated on a food label do not indicate the ounces of meat/meat alternate contained in the product.

To be creditable, a food must be CN labeled or the sponsor must obtain product information from the vendor or manufacturer that indicates the amount of meat/meat alternate (total weight) contained in the product. (See "Crediting Commercial Convenience Foods" on page 4.) If a sponsor is using a commercial product and just assuming that there is enough meat/meat alternate, the meal may be out of compliance.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size ½ cup (114 g)			
Servings Per Container 4			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 90		Calories from Fat 30	
		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	3 g		5%
Saturated Fat	0 g		0%
Cholesterol	0 mg		0%
Sodium	300 mg		13%
Total Carbohydrate	13 g		4%
Dietary Fiber	3 g		12%
Sugars	3 g		
Protein	3 g		
Vitamin A	80%	Vitamin C	60%
Calcium	4%	Iron	4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4
		Protein	4



It is the responsibility of the CACFP sponsor to provide documentation that any commercially prepared combination convenience product (e.g., pizza, burritos, chicken nuggets, etc.) contains a sufficient amount of meat/meat alternate.

For additional information on crediting meat and meat alternates, consult the Crediting Foods Guide in the Office of Child Nutrition's *Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the Child and Adult Care Food Program: Child Care Centers and Family Day Care Homes*. For questions regarding the crediting of foods in the CACFP, contact the Office of Child Nutrition at (860) 807-2070.



Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program

The Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program is a voluntary federal labeling program for the Child Nutrition Programs run by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). There is no federal requirement that anyone make or purchase CN labeled products. Purchasing decisions are left to the local level. If a CN labeled product is desired, this must be clearly stated in purchasing specifications.

A CN label statement clearly identifies the contribution of a product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on FNS's evaluation of the product's formulation. Manufacturers state this contribution on their labels, for example: "one serving provides 2 ounces of meat/meat alternate and ¼ cup vegetable/fruit." CN labeling provides a warranty against audit claims for purchasers of the product.

Eligible products for CN labels include main dish products which contribute to the meat/meat alternate component (e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls and bread fish portions), and juice and juice drink products containing at least 50 percent full-strength juice by volume (e.g., grape drink, fruit punch, frozen juice drink bars, and sherbet).

A CN label will always contain the following:

- the CN logo, which is a distinct border;
- the meal pattern contribution statement;
- a unique 6-digit product identification number (assigned by FNS), appearing in upper right hand corner of the CN logo;
- the USDA/FNS authorization statement;
- the month and year of final FNS approval; and
- the remaining required label features – product name, inspection legend, ingredient statement, signature/address line, and net weight.

Sample CN Label

